

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 AF-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 SAM-01 SAB-01 SCCT-02 AID-20 OMB-01

IGA-02 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2752

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 3244

JIDDA FOR PRESIDENT'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, IS

SUBJ: ISRAEL ON EVE OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S VISIT

1. SUMMARY: PREVAILING MOOD IN ISRAEL ON EVE OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S
VISIT IS MIXTURE OF CAUTIOUS CONCERN WHETHER DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT
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IN US-ARAB RELATIONS AS RESULT OF PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO ARAB CAPITALS

MAY BE AT EXPENSE OF ISRAELI INTERESTS, AND WIDESPREAD EXPECTATIONS THAT PRESIDENT WHILE IN ISRAEL WILL ANNOUNCE MAJOR US COMMITMENTS ON SECURITY AND ASSISTANCE TO ISRAEL. ISRAELI MOOD MUST BE SEEN AGAINST BACKGROUND OF OCTOBER WAR, RECENT GOLAN FIGHTING AND CONTINUED TERRORIST ATTACKS INCLUDING ATTACK JUNE 13 ON KIBBUTZ SHAMIR. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT NIXON'S VISIT TO FOUR ARAB COUNTRIES AND ISRAEL UNIVERSALLY REGARDED HERE AS UNPRECEDENTED HISTORIC EVENT, WITH MAJOR SIGNIFICANCE FOR FUTURE OF AREA. ISRAELIS GENERALLY SEE IN PRESIDENT'S VISIT A MOVE TO CONSOLIDATE RECENT GAINS IN ARAB WORLD AND TO PAVE WAY FOR SUBSEQUENT STAGES IN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. IN THIS RESPECT THEY REGARD VISIT IN TERMS OF CREATING CONDUCIVE ATMOSPHERE FOR FURTHER PEACE NEGOTIATIONS RATHER THAN IMMEDIATE SUBSTANTIVE SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX ARRAY OF PROBLEMS.

3. ISRAELI PUBLIC HAS BEEN EXPOSED TO SUBSTANTIAL REPORTING IN PRESS OF CHARGES IN US THAT PRESIDENT'S MIDDLE EAST VISIT IS MOTIVATED BY DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO WATERGATE. THE SECRETARY'S THREATENED RESIGNATION HAS HEIGHTENED SENSE OF ADVERSE IMPACT OF WATERGATE ON CONDUCT OF FOREIGN POLICY. CONSENSUS HERE HOWEVER SEEMS TO RELATE VISIT TO PRESIDENT'S LONG-STANDING AND DETERMINED EFFORTS TO SEEK PEACE SETTLEMENT IN MIDDLE EAST, WITH NOTE OF REGRET THAT WATERGATE HAS BEEN INJECTED INTO PARAMOUNT PROBLEM OF MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT.

4. ISRAELI PUBLIC HAS FOLLOWED WITH KEEN INTEREST PRESIDENT'S VISIT IN CAIRO. MASSIVE, EMOTIONAL RECEPTION ACCORDED PRESIDENT NIXON WIDELY REPORTED BY ISRAELI MEDIA. VISIT TO EGYPT AS WELL AS TO OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES HAS REVIVED QUESTION IN ISRAELI MIND AS TO HOW DRAMATIC CHANGE IN US RELATIONS WITH ARAB NATIONS WILL AFFECT ISRAELI INTERESTS. ISRAELIS GENERALLY BELIEVE THAT IMPROVED US RELATIONS WITH ARAB WORLD ARE ON BALANCE POSITIVE FACTOR IN SEARCH FOR PEACE AND WERE INDISPENSABLE INGREDIENT IN ENDING OCTOBER WAR AND ACHIEVING SEPARATION OF FORCES AGREEMENTS. EROSION OF HOSTILE SOVIET INFLUENCE IN MIDDLE EAST AS RESULT OF US INITIATIVE IS REGARDED AS DISTINCT ADVANTAGE. AT SAME TIME ISRAEL IS CONCERNED THAT IT MAY BE SUBJECTED TO INCREASED PRESSURES AT EXPENSE OF ITS SELF-PERCEIVED INTERESTS IN ORDER FOR US TO ASSURE CONTINUITY OF IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH ARABS. MOST BOTHERSOME
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ISSUES IN MINDS OF ISRAELIS ARE QUESTIONS OF TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS AND PALESTINIANS, WITH POSSIBILITY THAT PRESIDENT IN ARAB CAPITALS OR IN ISRAEL WILL RAISE ISSUE IN TERMS CONTRARY TO PRESENT ISRAELI ATTITUDES TOWARDS NEGOTIATION WITH PALESTINIANS. TERRORIST ATTACK JUNE 13 ON KIBBUTZ SHAMIR HAS HEIGHTENED POLITICAL AS WELL AS EMOTIONAL OPPOSITION TO DEALING WITH FEDAYEEN ORGANIZATIONS.

5. MOST PERVASIVE ASPECT OF MOOD IN ISRAEL ON EVE OF PRESIDENT'S

VISIT IS EXPECTATION OF FIRM PLEDGE FOR CONTINUED AND EVEN EXPANDED US AID TO ISRAEL. PUBLIC EXPECTS HIGHER LEVELS OF MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, HOPEFULLY EXTENDED ON LONG-TERM BASIS. SUPPORT IN OBTAINING RIGHTS OF FREE EMIGRATION OF SOVIET AND SYRIAN JEWRY ALSO WIDELY ANTICIPATED.

6. DESPITE APPREHENSIONS OVER CHANGING CHARACTER OF US RELATIONS WITH ARAB COUNTRIES, ISRAELI MOOD IS FIRMLY ROOTED IN HOPE THAT LONG-STANDING SUPPORT OF US, AS SO STRONGLY EVIDENCED BY THE PRESIDENT DURING OCTOBER WAR, WILL CONTINUE AND BE STRENGTHENED AS RESULT OF HIS VISIT TO ISRAEL. ON OTHER HAND, LEVEL OF ISRAELI EXPECTATIONS IS SUCH THAT UNLESS THERE ARE SUBSTANTIAL PRESIDENTIAL ASSURANCES WITH RESPECT FUTURE SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE, THERE WILL BE DISAPPOINTMENT, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW ISRAELI SENSE OF ISOLATION AND DEPENDENCE ON US AS ONLY COUNTRY CAPABLE OF ASSURING ITS SECURITY.
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